

The Rapid Pulse

October 2001

The Director's Perspective

By Dr. Eugene Migliaccio

The tragic events of September 11, 2001 have touched the hearts of all Americans and weighed heavily on all of our minds. We have experienced the pain of terrorism and now are beginning to experience the resolve of unity. At the request of the Office of Emergency Preparedness (OEP), I went to Ground Zero to say 'thank you' to our staff members supporting medical operations there. I witnessed the evilness of hatred, but I also witnessed the care and compassion of our health care professionals, and that helped ease my pain. I want to thank the officers who have provided support during this national emergency. They have risen to the occasion and showed the entire nation the true meaning of patriotism, and in doing so, have made us all proud.

On a lighter note, I am pleased to present the re-birth of *The Rapid Pulse*, DIHS' official newsletter, under the leadership of its new Editor, Shalana Millard. In addition to serving as our technical writer/editor at Headquarters, Shalana has assumed the role of Editor of *The Rapid Pulse*. And many wonderful changes are in store! *The Rapid Pulse* will be moving from a quarterly newsletter to one that will be published monthly. At any time, feel

free to contact Shalana with ideas or suggestions on content.

Communication is vital to the success of any organization, large or small. Therefore, *The Rapid Pulse* will serve as an important communication tool for our Division. I'm particularly pleased with this issue. We have exciting updates on DIHS' Publications Committee, the dignitaries that have visited our El Paso facility, and what Buffalo is doing to promote detainee health.

I hope you'll take a few moments to read and enjoy this installment of our Division's newsletter. Once again, I say a heartfelt thank you to each and every staff member for being truly public servants and recognizing the unique role of DIHS at this time in our nation's history.



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Faces and Places

WELCOME

El Centro, California

LTJG Rebecca Stafford
(7/9/01)
LTJG James Manning
(7/24/01)

El Paso, Texas

LT Joe Tittle (7/05/01)
LT Angel Lasant
(7/11/01)

Elizabeth, New Jersey

LT Jideon Virata
(7/10/01)

Florence, Arizona

LT Larry Highsmith
(7/23/01)
LT Eileen Falzini
(8/15/01)

Miami, Florida

LT Dawn Anderson-Gary (7/02/01)
LTJG Monique Brantley
(9/01/01)

New York, New York

LT Susan Brady
(8/20/01)

Port Isabel, Texas

LT Anthony Keen
(8/15/01)
LCDR Wanda Gonzalez
(8/27/01)

San Pedro, California

LTJG Tim Kahn
(9/01/01)

Washington, DC

LTJG Melissa Gerstner
(8/22/01)

FAREWELL

Betty Gerlach—
Washington, DC

Our Heroes at Ground Zero

CCRF:

**Anna Gonazles
Mike Chuley
Stephen Gonzalves
Shelly Hollandsworth
Susan Brady
Keesha Williams
Roldi Jones
Neal Collins
Lisa Hogan
Rob Steiner
Melissa Gerstner
Stacey Jennings
Chris Hennessee
Barbara Barlow
Diana Schneider**

PHS 1 DMAT:

**Andrea Argabrite
Richard Lawson**

CCRF/OEP/HQ:

Geralyn Johnson

**We salute your
patriotism and
service, and also
thank those who
remain at the field
sites to help conduct
the business of the
day.**

From the Chief of Staff...

By Dr. Geralyn Johnson

The world as we know it has changed. The events of the past weeks are difficult to comprehend. I found myself glued to the TV and radio for the first few days, listening to every detail - watching the towers fall - over and over and over.

I just could not believe what had happened and the terrible sense of sadness that I felt. I could not hold back the tears whenever "I'm Proud to be an American" played on the radio or I saw another TV interview with a survivor trying to make sense of why he survived and so many others did not.

I was overwhelmed by telephone calls and emails from friends far away. People that I hadn't spoken to in years called to make sure I was OK. It was surprising how many expressed feelings of frustration that they were too far away and could not be in Washington, DC or New York, doing something to help. It was the same frustration that we in the DIHS felt when we were told to be ready but sit tight - and wait for the call. But in that first week the call never came.

We are a talented, rough and

ready team. We have skills that are disappearing among PHS officers. We are tough as nails - we have proven our efficiency and our stamina in many field assignments. We know how to conduct ourselves in the field and on deployment. We are field ready - we are the best. But still the call never came. Make no mistake, we all have a part to play. Disaster response, above all else, requires patience.

Eventually, some of our officers were deployed. But for the rest of us who long to lend a helping hand at the disaster site, our job at present is to get back to business as usual. That means using this waiting time to put clinics in order, become as operationally efficient as possible, and above all else, keep ourselves healthy and ready. This will be a long war and we have two missions to support - that of the INS and that of the PHS.

Most importantly, now is the time to contemplate what is truly important in our lives, our work, and our relationships. I hope that the spirit that has swept across America, will also infiltrate our Division and we can finally all agree that it is not about individuals, it is about the team.

Now is the time to be a good American and a good officer. Be patriotic. Be tolerant. Be understanding. Be patient. Work hard and the rewards will come.

This issue of *The Rapid Pulse* is dedicated to those directly affected by this tragedy, especially our fellow Federal government employees.

Our Mission:

We promote global health through the delivery of primary care to undocumented migrants.

Our Priorities:

Employees

◆
Quality

◆
Cost

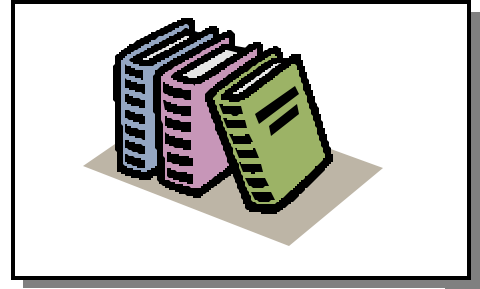
New Changes for DIHS Publications Committee

By Dr. Diana Schneider

The Director of DIHS has recently assigned new leadership to the Division's Publications Committee. At the same time, the Committee was assigned the task of developing a policy and procedure for reviewing and recommending submitted materials for approval.

Under the new policy, materials prepared for all speaking engagements outside of the DIHS or Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) environment, including manuscripts and other documents developed for publication, must be reviewed by the Publications Committee. The new guidelines have been developed to ensure that DIHS complies with the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) and INS requirements for oversight of disseminated work, as well as to ensure the quality of information produced by DIHS employees.

As you know, HRSA is currently under the direction of a new Acting Administrator. With this new leadership, all HRSA policies are under extreme scrutiny. A new policy was established earlier this year requiring that all speaking engagements and subsequent materials be reviewed



and approved by the HRSA Office of Communications. The DIHS Publications Committee will facilitate this process. Additionally, certain types of publications and materials disseminated to the public must be reviewed and approved by HRSA and/or INS.

The Publications Committee will also be responsible for the distribution of materials to the appropriate office for review. The reviews by the DIHS Publications Committee are intended to protect individual staff members from any problems that might arise from the dissemination of potentially confidential and/or controversial information. Please understand that such oversight is common in all Federal agencies, and is not intended to stifle the exceptional work of our staff.

This is an exciting time for the DIHS Publications Committee and we look forward to everyone's cooperation.

Dignitaries Visit El Paso

By CDR Phil Jarres

At any time, the medical facility at one of the INS Service Processing Centers may be subject to a visit from a dignitary. This affords those of us who represent the Division an opportunity to share with these special individuals our mission of global disease prevention through the delivery of primary healthcare to undocumented migrants.

Perhaps the most important visit of the past several months was that of Attorney General John Ashcroft in May of this year. The focus of his visit was to observe INS and Border Patrol operations in the region. As part of his itinerary he had the chance to tour the El Paso Facility. He was most impressed with the medical screening process and the use of teleradiology. One of the touring dignitaries commented that he could not believe there was a hospital in the camp.

In July a group of high level journalists from Pakistan toured the facility. Their attention was focused on developments in Afghanistan and U.S. relations. They were impressed with the facility's organization, operations and treatment of the detained. Also visiting in July were representatives of the De-



CDR Phil Jarres (r) with
RADM Richard Walling

partment of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for the Republic of Turkmenistan and Mr. Manfred Kolbe, Minister of Justice in Saxony, Republic of Germany.

A special visit in August was made by U.S. Representative Silvestre Reyes along with Mexican legislators. The purpose was to educate members of the Mexican Congress on border issues. Several days later a second group of 10 Mexican legislators toured the camp. That same week a Russian delegation of individuals from the Ministry of Internal Affairs in the Amur Region toured the facility in an attempt to gather ideas about management of migration.

Mexican Consul General Dr. Juan Hernandez also visited the camp in August. He is Special

see Dignitaries— page 8



SURVEY NEWS!!

We congratulate the El Paso Medical Referral Center for outstanding work during their highly successful NCCHC survey in August!

Congratulations also to the Port Isabel Medical Facility for receiving a preliminary score of 98 and NO Type One deficiencies during their triennial JCAHO survey in August!

Thanks for a job very well done!

Nursing: A Noble Profession

By LCDR Linda Jo Belsito

When I started in nursing 21 years ago I could never have imagined that one day I would hold the position of Lieutenant Commander with the United States Public Health Service!

It was October 2000 and I was reading *Nursing Spectrum* when I noticed a small ad for an RN. It asked if the reader was interested in a career change, with an opportunity to travel. It also offered great benefits. There was a website address and I checked it out — inshealth.org.

What I read intrigued me and the mission statement, “**We promote global health through the delivery of primary health care to undocumented migrants,**” touched me. I applied and got the job — a Commissioned Officer position as an RN in the US Public Health Service.

This position has been a great change for me both personally and professionally. I provide primary healthcare, initial screening for infectious diseases, and follow-up medical care to immigrant detainees while they are in the detention center.

We also act as medical escorts for those who need assistance when traveling back to their countries of origin. My whole career focus has changed. My outlook on the future is fresh and new. And as a daughter of



LCDR Linda Jo Belsito

a Navy dad, I am proud to wear the Public Health Service uniform every day.

We are encouraged to teach, write, learn, grow and use this knowledge to enhance the lives of others. I work with a team of medical professionals who also have military backgrounds and this is in complete contrast to anything I’ve done before.

And like my colleagues who have made a change in their nursing careers I find I actually love to go to work each day and look forward to learning new things.

So, to those of you who feel the need for change, check out the next issue of *Nursing Spectrum* — there is no time like the present.

Editor’s Note:

DIHS is proud that its very own LCDR Linda Jo Belsito had this article published in the magazine *Nursing Spectrum*. Congratulations!

“Our multi-cultural society makes living in the United States more interesting. And immigrants make us proud. Proud that we were fortunate enough to be born in a country that is the dream destination for people from every nation on earth.”

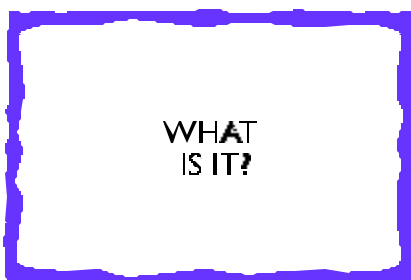
-Dr. Migliaccio during remarks to the New York Medical College’s Graduate School of Health Sciences

Accountable Property

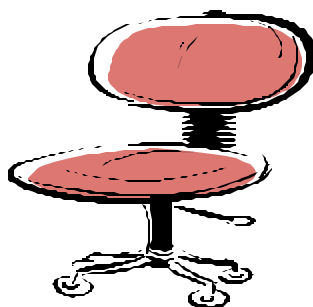
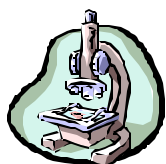
LT Rhondalyn Cox

Headquarters has implemented a property accountability program – managed by me – LT Rhondalyn Cox. At this time I expect many of the Accountable Area Managers (AAMs) and Property Custodians (PCs) are conducting (or have conducted) annual inventory of accountable property. For those of you who are not familiar - let's refresh everyone's memory on what Accountable Property is.

Accountable Property



By definition— Nonexpendable personal property consists of those items whose expected useful life is two years or longer and whose acquisition value is \$5,000 or greater, as well as items classified as sensitive or personal appeal items (i.e. pilferable), regardless of acquisition value.



Another favorite question seems to be:

How do I get rid of...?

If you have items you don't need (and that are still in working order) - prepare a list and forward it to me via email. I'll send a message to everyone on what's available. If you find something on the list that you want, notify me and we'll start the transfer process (completing HHS-22).

Or if you've already promised an item to someone at another site...that's fine too. Complete the paperwork (HHS-22), send it to me and you're off and running with getting it out of your space! (Good riddance, right?)

Where to find more info: www.hrsanet.hrsa.gov

To contact me: 202-616-0980 or via email at rhondalyn.cox@usdoj.gov



Congratulations to DIHS' 2001 HRSA Honor Awardees:

Administrator's Special Citation:

Miriam Pabon
Chang Park
Timothy Shack

Administrator's Award for Outstanding Support:

Linda Kittrell

Commendation Medal:

Denise
Williams

DIHS Adds Social Worker to Multi-Disciplinary Team

By LCDR Jay Seligman

The Division of Immigration Health Services is growing rapidly and the Executive Council has invited a new profession into our multi-disciplinary team! We are proud to announce the first clinical social worker position at DIHS. The social worker will be shared by the three facilities in the greater New York area.

Social work is a profession for those with a strong desire to help people, to make things better, and ultimately make a difference. Social workers help people function the best way they can in their environment, deal with their relationships with others, and solve personal and family problems. They often see clients who face a life-threatening disease or a social problem. These problems may include inadequate housing, unemployment, lack of job skills, financial distress, serious illness or disability, substance abuse, unwanted pregnancy, or antisocial behavior. Social workers also assist families that have serious domestic conflicts, including those involving child or spousal abuse.

Through direct counseling, they help clients identify their concerns, consider effective solutions, and find reliable resources. They typically consult and counsel clients and arrange for services that can help them, and follow through with the client to assure that services are helpful and that those in need make proper use of the services offered. Social workers practice in a variety of settings. In hospitals and psychiatric settings, they provide or arrange for many support services.

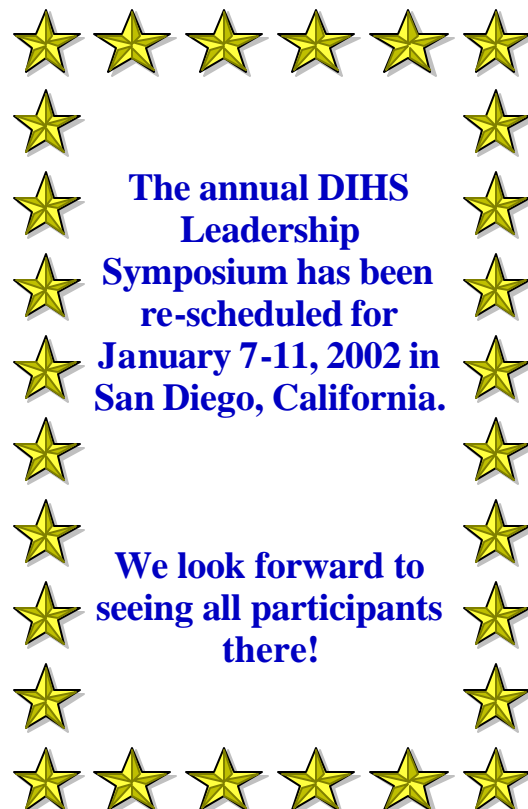
see Social Worker— page 8

Buffalo Promotes Detainee Health

By LCDR Lisa Hogan

The staff at the Buffalo Service Processing Center (SPC) have recently introduced a detainee health promotion educational series in line with Surgeon General David Satcher's Health People 2010 Initiatives and the Leading Health Indicators.

Classes have been developed and implemented on topics such as Depression, Health and Fitness, Healthy Sexual Behavior and Managing Hypertension. The classes are very popular with the detainees, and staff hope to expand the program in the near future.



Social Worker— from page 7

In mental health and community centers, social workers help people through personal or community emergencies, such as dealing with loss or grief or arranging for disaster assistance. Forensic social workers work in courts and correctional facilities, make recommendations to courts, prepare presentencing assessments, and provide services to detainees and their families. In addition, they provide clinical or diagnostic testing services covering a wide range of personal disorders. They emphasize short-term intervention, ambulatory and community-based care, and greater decentralization of services.

Social workers are truly public servants whose compassion and caring have called them to assist those who need a helping hand.

Did You Know?

The new 2002 per diem rates are available on the web at:

<http://policyworks.gov/org/main/mt/homepage/mtt/perdiem/download02.html>



HHS Form 350 (Training Authorization and Nomination) and PHS Form 1345 (Request and Authority for Leave of Absence for Commissioned Officers) are just some of the forms that can be ordered by sending a fax to the HRSA Forms Store at 301-443-9349.

Dignitaries— from page 4

Advisor to Mexican President Vicente Fox. Dr. Hernandez was surprised by the exceptional quality of the living conditions and reported that much of what he saw dispelled many myths about how Mexican nationals are treated. He stated “I’m working on developing ideas/strategies to get more “good news” about the service (INS) to make headlines and air on the nightly news.” Mr. LAI Issac Ieng Kit, Director of the Identification Department of the Macau Government also made a visit in late August and found the medical facilities remarkable.

In September, the facility was honored by the visit from RADM Richard Walling, Chief Pharmacist of the Public Health Service and CAPT Micheal Lyman, of the Office of the Americas and Middle East, Office of International and Refugee Health. They represented an advance party making preparations for a possible site visit by HHS Secretary Tommy Thompson, who is expected to be in the area in October. RADM Walling commented on the scope of services offered by our Division and of the professionalism and dedication to duty he observed in the medical staff.

With the recent developments around the globe a far greater emphasis will be placed on the role of the PHS. Our Division has the distinction of interconnectivity with the people of the world and their health. Our mission now more than ever is to represent this nation and our Division with dignity and inform others of this very special role.